STAR WARS

MARVEL

039

GILLEN
LARROCA
GURU-eFX

Part II

THE ASHES OF JEDHA

It is a period of high tension in the galaxy. The Galactic Empire has returned to Jedha in an attempt to collect the remaining weapon-powering kyber crystals that survived the Death Star's attack.

Meanwhile, Rebel leaders Princess Leia and Luke Skywalker, joined by smuggler Han Solo, are leading the mission to find a new base for their operation. Upon arriving on Jedha, the rebels quickly join forces with natives of the nearly destroyed planet, Chulco Gi and ex-rebel Ubin.

However, when Ubin and Chulco lead the heroes of the Rebellion to meet with surviving members of Saw Gerrera's partisans, their welcome is less than friendly....

KIERON GILLEN
Writer

SALVADOR LARROCA
Artist

GURU-eFX
Colorist

VC's CLAYTON COWLES
Letterer

DAVID MARQUEZ & MATTHEW WILSON
Cover

HEATHER ANTOS
Assistant Editor

JORDAN D. WHITE
Editor

C.B. CEBULSKI
Executive Editor

AXEL ALONSO
Editor In Chief

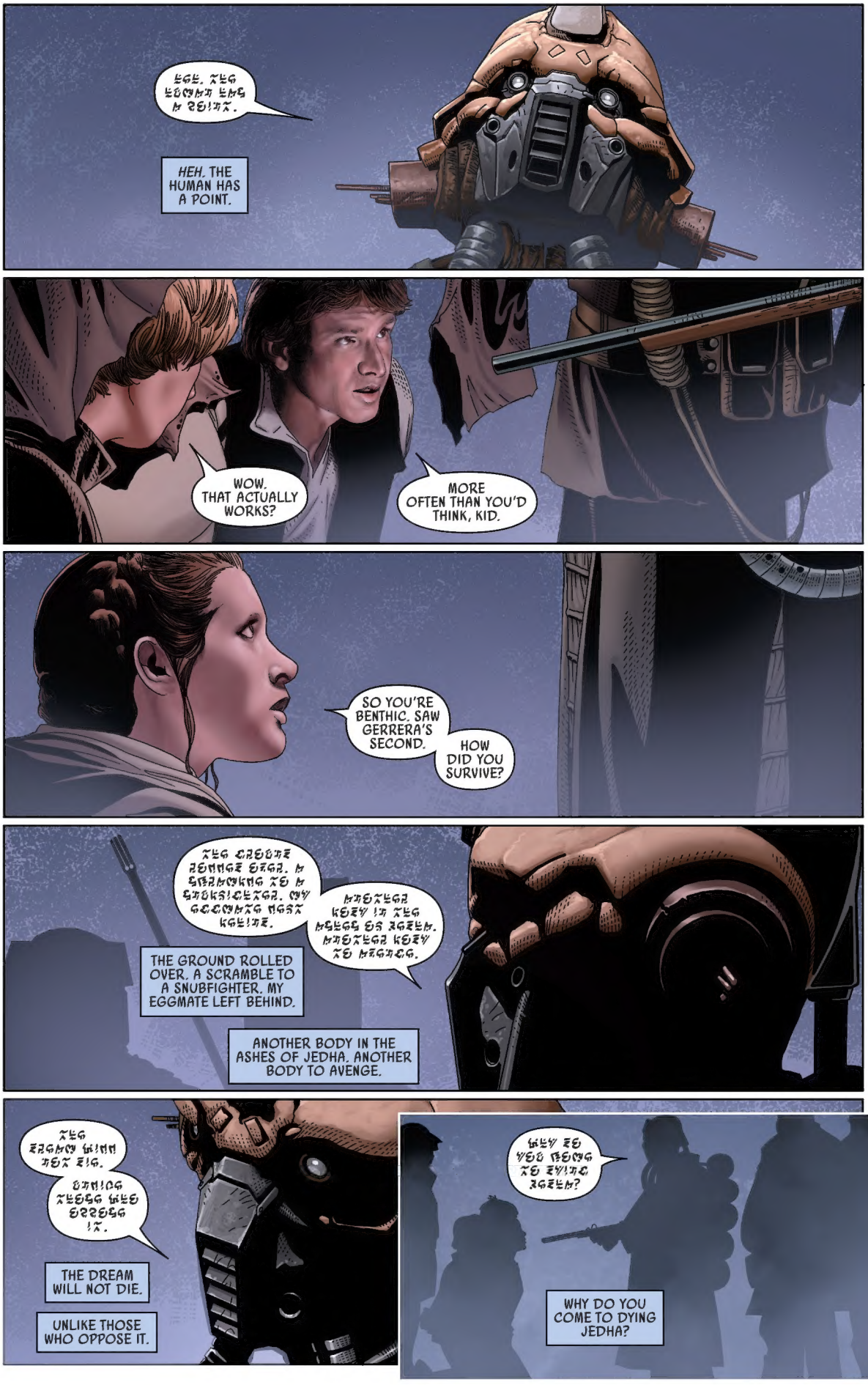
JOE QUESADA
Chief Creative Officer

DAN BUCKLEY
President

For Lucasfilm:
Senior Editor FRANK PARISI
Creative Director MICHAEL SIGLAIN
Lucasfilm Story Group JAMES WAUGH, LELAND CHEE, MATT MARTIN

STAR WARS and related text and illustrations are trademarks and/or copyrights, in the United States and other countries, of Lucasfilm Ltd. and/or its affiliates. © & TM Lucasfilm Ltd. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. Marvel and its logos are TM Marvel Characters, Inc. WWW.MARVEL.COM

HMPH.
BENTHIC...
SILENCE.
WELL... THIS GOT TENSE.
LISTEN--YOU'RE EITHER GOING TO TRUST US OR NOT. IF YOU TRUST US, YOU'LL TAKE THESE HOODS OFF. IF YOU DON'T, YOU'LL SHOOT US, SO IT DOESN'T MATTER WHETHER YOU LEAVE THE HOODS ON, TAKE THEM OFF OR ANYTHING ELSE!
SO TAKE OFF THE DAMN HOODS!


HEH. THE HUMAN HAS A POINT.
WOW. THAT ACTUALLY WORKS?
MORE OFTEN THAN YOU'D THINK, KID.
SO YOU'RE BENTHIC. SAW GERRERA'S SECOND.
HOW DID YOU SURVIVE?
THE GROUND ROLLED OVER. A SCRAMBLE TO A SNUBFIGHTER. MY EGGMATE LEFT BEHIND.
ANOTHER BODY IN THE ASHES OF JEDHA. ANOTHER BODY TO AVENGE.
THE DREAM WILL NOT DIE.
UNLIKE THOSE WHO OPPOSE IT.
WHY DO YOU COME TO DYING JEDHA?

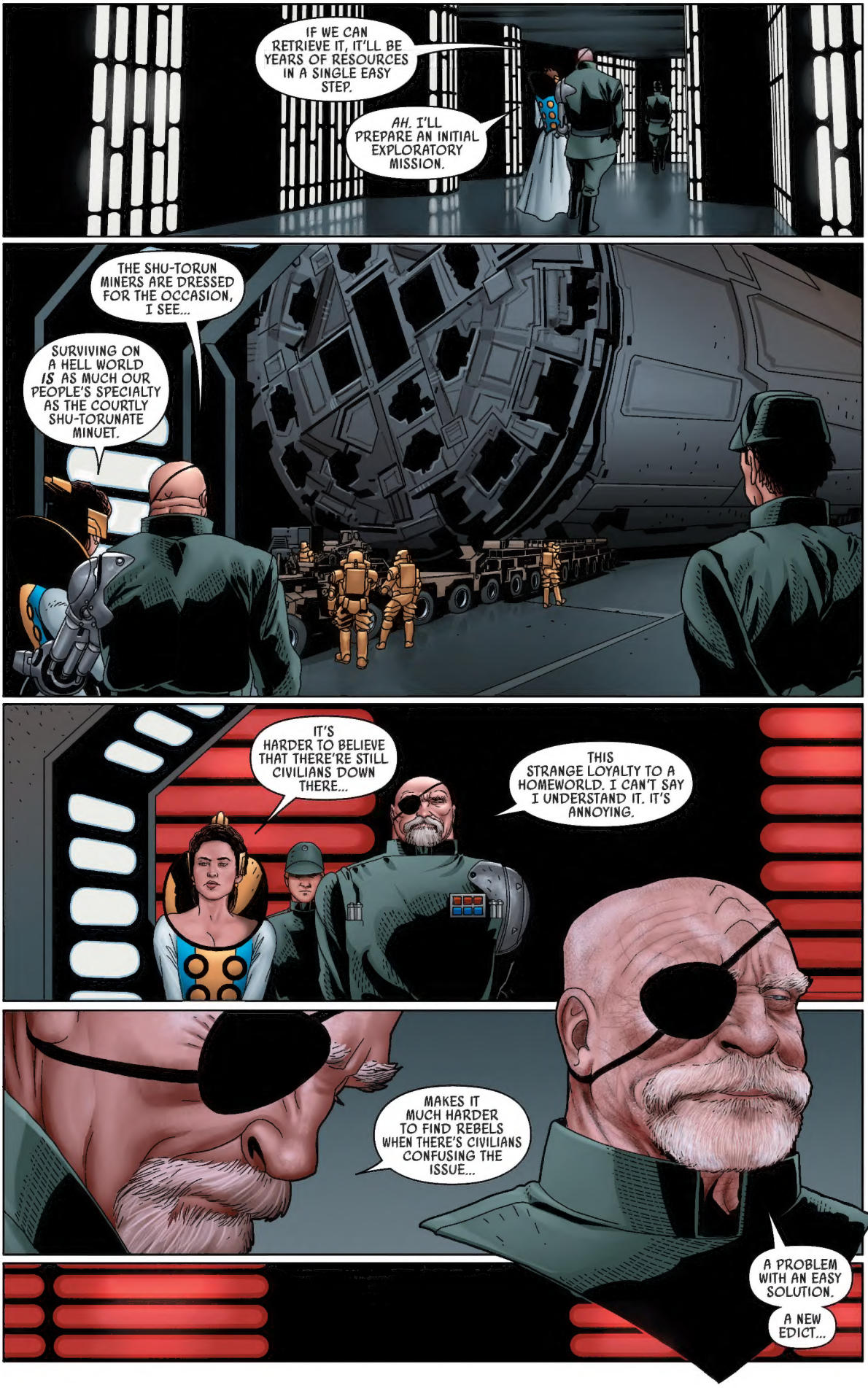
THE DEATH STAR.
WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THE IMPERIALS COULD BUILD NEXT.
ONE THING WE DO KNOW--WHATEVER THEY TRY, WE HAVE TO STOP IT.
THEY'RE MINING KYBER CRYSTALS AGAIN? WE MAKE THAT AS HARD AS POSSIBLE. THE ALLIANCE WILL SUPPORT ANYONE WHO'S DOING THAT.
WE WILL NEVER FOLLOW YOUR ORDERS.
WE KNOW. WE DON'T WANT YOU TO.
THE PARTISANS ON JEDHA DID MAGNIFICENTLY BY THEMSELVES...
...THEY'D DO BETTER IF THEY WERE BETTER SUPPLIED.
YOU'LL FIND THE FIRST SHIPMENT ABOARD OUR SHIP. I'M HERE TO SECURE WHATEVER FUTURE ARRANGEMENT THAT WILL WORK FOR YOU.
WHILE WE'RE WITH YOU, YOU'LL HAVE FULL USE OF OUR SKILLS AND TALENTS.
PITH. ALLIANCE "TALENTS."

SIR, I'M REBEL SPECIAL FORCES TRAINED.
YOU KNOW HOW USEFUL I'VE BEEN.
AND THIS IS PRINCESS LEIA OF ALDERAAN.
THIS IS LUKE SKYWALKER. HE DESTROYED THE DEATH STAR.
THIS IS HAN SOLO. HE...HELPED? I THINK.
THANKS A LOT.
I AM THE LAST PRINCESS OF MY WORLD.
THERE MUST NEVER BE ANOTHER ALDERAAN. THERE MUST NEVER BE ANOTHER JEDHA.
WE ARE SISTERS IN PAIN AND WE HAVE TO STAND TOGETHER.
PRETTY WORDS. SAW GERRERA HAD PRETTY WORDS, TOO.
BUT HIS DEEDS WERE LESS SO...

SAW GERRERA ONCE BOMBARDED A PARTY OF COLLABORATING CIVILIANS WITH FLECHETTES JUST TO SEND A MESSAGE TO THE IMPERIALS.
HE DID WHAT--?
PLEASE, LUKE.
WOULD YOU DO THAT?

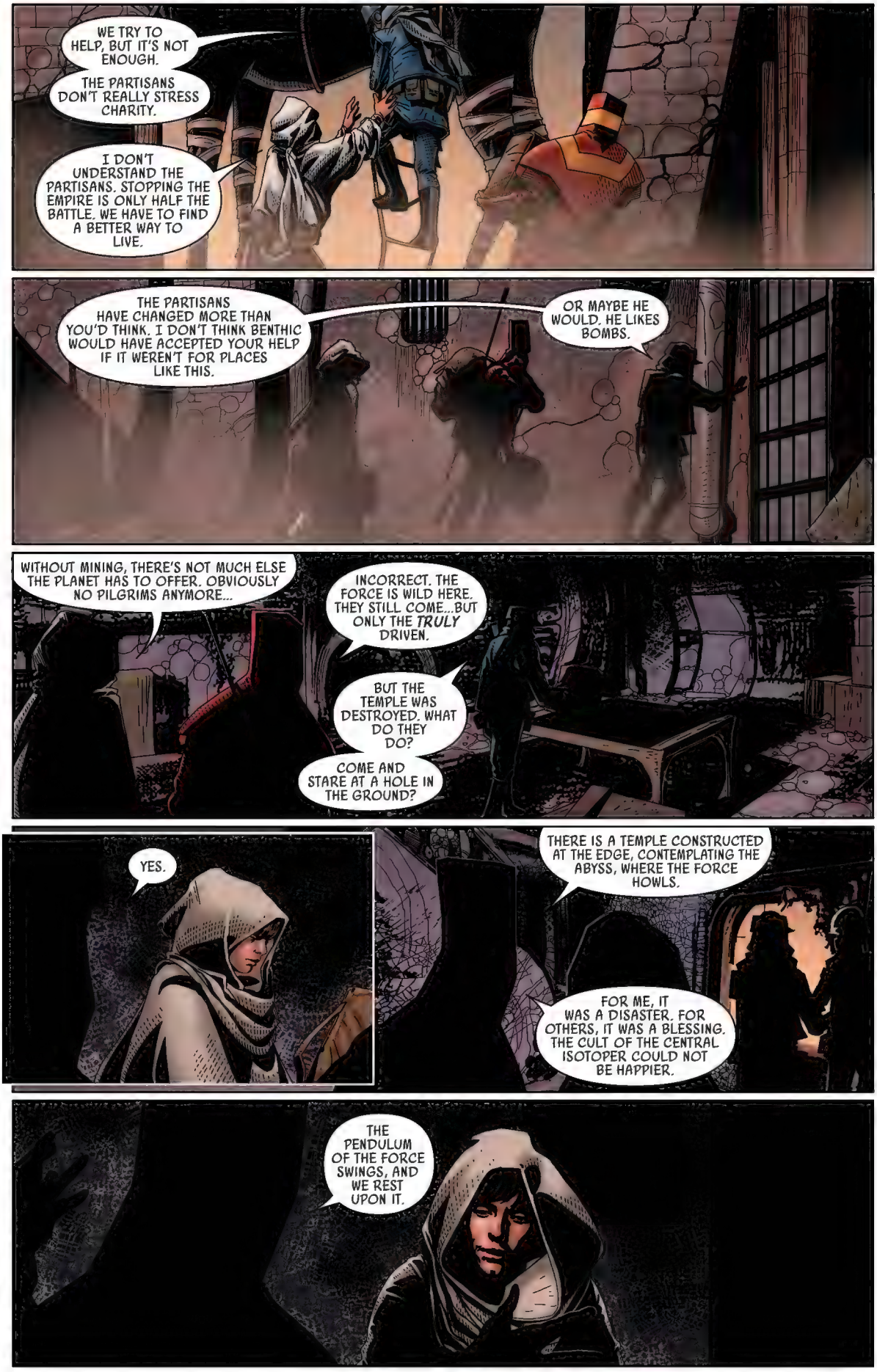
WE'RE HERE, AREN'T WE? KILL US OR DON'T.
SHOW US SOME OF THAT PARTISAN DECISIVENESS YOU'RE SO FAMOUS FOR.
HAN...
DON'T WORRY. WE'LL BE FINE.
DEFINITELY.
WE NEED WHAT YOU OFFER. COME, PRINCESS. WE HAVE MUCH TO DISCUSS.
BLOO-EEE-OOO-AAAAAH?
NO, I THINK THERE'S NO NEED TO RUSH OUT QUITE YET.
OUR MASTERS WILL CALL WHEN THEY REQUIRE US.
LUKE...I SEE THE CONFLICT INSIDE YOU. YOU SHOULD SEE HOW THE EMPIRE HAS LEFT JEDHA'S PEOPLE...
WE'RE HEADING TO DISTRIBUTE FILTERS. WE COULD DO WITH THE HELP.

I'VE THE REPORTS FROM THE CRYSTAL RESONATORS WE DROPPED ON THE SURFACE.
WE FOUND A PEAK OF KYBER ABOUT 20 KILOMETERS EAST OF JEDHA CITY. IN THE AREA THAT WAS... THE CATACOMBS OF CADERA?
THE RESONATORS WOULD ONLY PICK UP *UNNATURALLY* HIGH CONCENTRATIONS OF THE GEMS.
WHAT HAVEN'T YOU TOLD ME, COMMANDER?
SAW GERRERA CAPTURED A *LOT* OF KYBER. I SUSPECTED IT WAS BURIED WHEN THE DEATH STAR FLIPPED OVER THE SURFACE.
THAT WOULD MAKE SAW'S BASE THE KYBER MOTHERLOAD.
YOU WOULD NOT BELIEVE THE PERCENTAGE OF OUR MINING THAT WAS INTERCEPTED BY THAT REBEL.
IMPRESSIVELY EFFICIENT.
YOU SOUND ALMOST SMITTEN.
OF COURSE I ADMIRE HIM! HE WAS GOOD AT HIS JOB.
COMPETENCE IS A RARE ENOUGH QUALITY IN THIS UNIVERSE TO LET MERE ETHICAL WEAKNESS BLIND ME TO ITS MERITS.
THANKFULLY, SAW GERRERA IS DEAD, AND PROVIDED US WITH A FINE PRIZE TO CLAIM...


IF WE CAN RETRIEVE IT, IT'LL BE YEARS OF RESOURCES IN A SINGLE EASY STEP.
AH. I'LL PREPARE AN INITIAL EXPLORATORY MISSION.
THE SHU-TORUN MINERS ARE DRESSED FOR THE OCCASION, I SEE...
SURVIVING ON A HELL WORLD *IS* AS MUCH OUR PEOPLE'S SPECIALTY AS THE COURTLY SHU-TORUNATE MINUET.
IT'S HARDER TO BELIEVE THAT THERE'RE STILL CIVILIANS DOWN THERE...
THIS STRANGE LOYALTY TO A HOMEWORLD. I CAN'T SAY I UNDERSTAND IT. IT'S ANNOYING.
MAKES IT MUCH HARDER TO FIND REBELS WHEN THERE'S CIVILIANS CONFUSING THE ISSUE...
A PROBLEM WITH AN EASY SOLUTION.
A NEW EDICT...

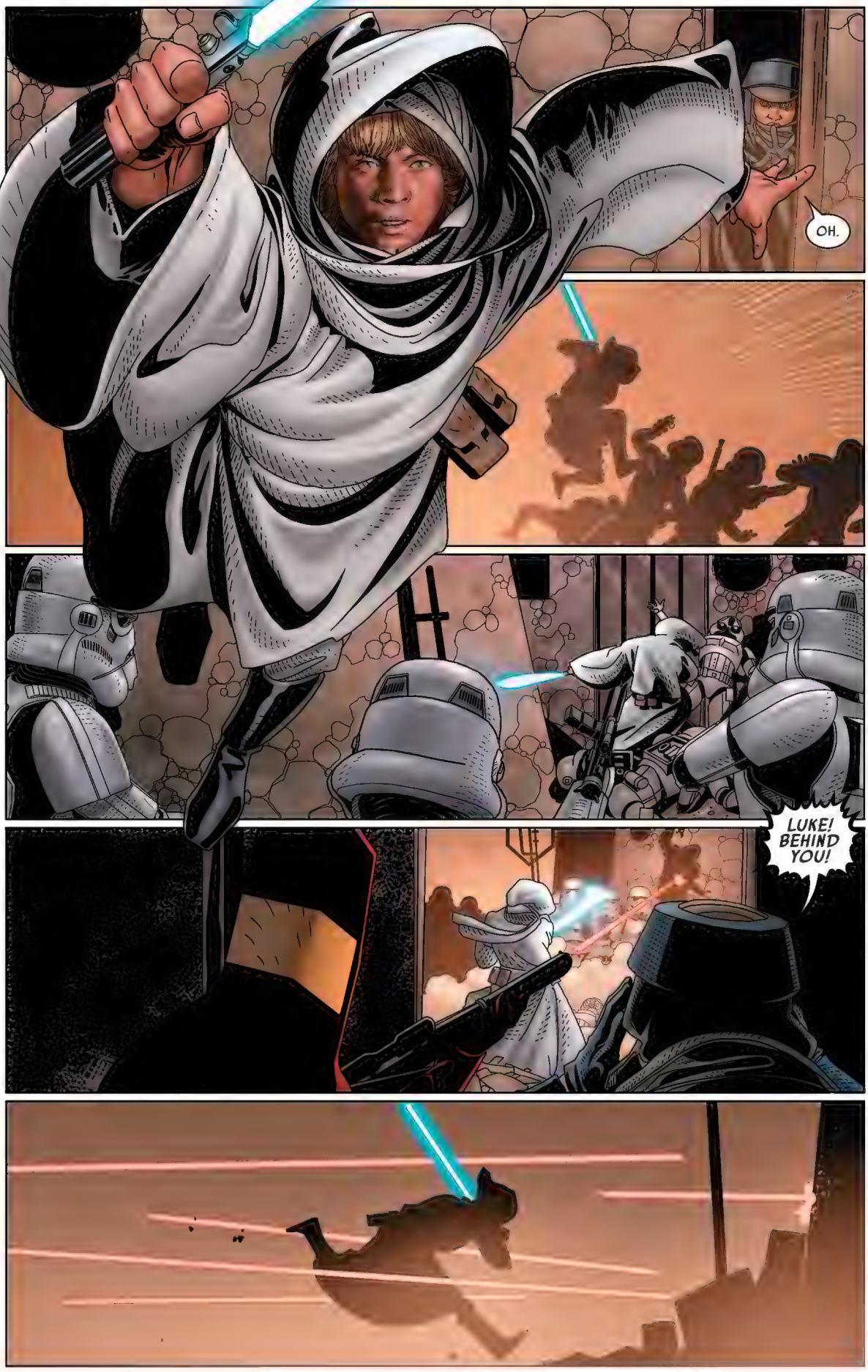
JEDHA IS NOW A PROHIBITED MOON. ANYONE THERE IS IPSO FACTO A REBEL.
ANY BREAKING OF THE IMPERIAL EDICT WILL BE PUNISHED.
AND THE PUNISHMENT IS, SIR?
REALLY? "WHAT IS THE PUNISHMENT"?
WHAT DO YOU *THINK* THE PUNISHMENT IS? A FIRM SLAP ON THE WRIST?
BLOODY FOOLS.
I'M TRYING TO BRING ORDER TO THE GALAXY WITH AN ARMY OF WHITE-CLAD CLOWNS AND CLERKS IN CAPS.
WHERE CAN I FIND *MY* SAW GERRERA, YOUR MAJESTY?
PLEASE.
CALL ME TRIOS.

Ai-jed, Jedha.
WHY DO PEOPLE STILL LIVE HERE?
NO. I KNOW.
IT'S THEIR HOME.
YES, LUKE. PLUS, IT'S NOT AS IF THERE'RE REGULAR FLIGHTS OFFWORLD.
THE ONLY ADVANTAGE OF THE RUINED ATMOSPHERE IS SMUGGLING RUNS ARE EASIER. THE PROBLEM IS EVERYONE IS SO POOR, BARELY ANYONE COMES.
THERE'S A HANDFUL OF RESOURCES THE REMAINING MINES CAN EXTRACT. IF YOU'RE LUCKY, THEY CAN SELL FOR ENOUGH TO EAT.
I DON'T THINK ANYONE'S LUCKY HERE.


WE TRY TO HELP, BUT IT'S NOT ENOUGH.
THE PARTISANS DON'T REALLY STRESS CHARITY.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE PARTISANS. STOPPING THE EMPIRE IS ONLY HALF THE BATTLE. WE HAVE TO FIND A BETTER WAY TO LIVE.
THE PARTISANS HAVE CHANGED MORE THAN YOU'D THINK. I DON'T THINK BENTHIC WOULD HAVE ACCEPTED YOUR HELP IF IT WEREN'T FOR PLACES LIKE THIS.
OR MAYBE HE WOULD. HE LIKES BOMBS.
WITHOUT MINING, THERE'S NOT MUCH ELSE THE PLANET HAS TO OFFER. OBVIOUSLY NO PILGRIMS ANYMORE...
INCORRECT. THE FORCE IS WILD HERE. THEY STILL COME...BUT ONLY THE *TRULY* DRIVEN.
BUT THE TEMPLE WAS DESTROYED. WHAT DO THEY DO?
COME AND STARE AT A HOLE IN THE GROUND?
YES.
THERE IS A TEMPLE CONSTRUCTED AT THE EDGE, CONTEMPLATING THE ABYSS, WHERE THE FORCE HOWLS.
FOR ME, IT WAS A DISASTER. FOR OTHERS, IT WAS A BLESSING. THE CULT OF THE CENTRAL ISOTOPER COULD NOT BE HAPPIER.
THE PENDULUM OF THE FORCE SWINGS, AND WE REST UPON IT.

WE'RE DONE. WE CAN TRUST THEM TO DISTRIBUTE THE FILTERS. I GREW UP WITH SO MANY PEOPLE LIKE THIS...
YOU CAME BACK TO FIGHT FOR YOUR HOMEWORLD?
THE PLANET HAS NO FUTURE, BUT I WON'T ABANDON THEM. AND...
YOU KNOW ABOUT ROGUE ONE?
ONLY A LITTLE. A MISSION TO SCARIF. TO GET THE PLANS FOR THE DEATH STAR?
THE COMMANDERS SEEM ALMOST... EMBARRASSED ABOUT IT.
THEY SHOULD BE. THOSE WHO WERE GOOD ENOUGH TO DISOBEY ORDERS TO DO THE RIGHT THING WENT AND DIED. THOSE WHO DIDN'T GO ARE STILL HERE.
JYN ERSO LED THE MISSION. I WISH I COULD HAVE GONE WITH HER...
YOU'D BE DEAD IF YOU HAD, FRIEND.
TELL ME ABOUT HER, I--
KRRRK
WHAT'S GOING ON OUT THERE?

STORMTROOPERS!
THEY'RE INCINERATING EVERYONE.
I... I...
HEAD OUT THE BACK. GET TO BENTHIC AND PREPARE A COUNTERATTACK.
THEY'LL PAY FOR--


OH.
LUKE! BEHIND YOU!

LOST HIM. GET THE REST.
ER...HELLO. STAY INSIDE UNTIL IT'S SAFE.
I NEED TO FIND A WAY TO SNEAK UP ON THEM AND...
AH!
I'M SORRY ABOUT YOUR WALL.
WHERE'S HE GONE?

MURDERERS!
ALL OF THEM? THE FORCE IS POWERFUL.
SO IS IMPERIAL ORBITAL BOMBARDMENT.
WE NEED TO GET EVERYONE OUT OF HERE.
LUKE--GOOD WORK, BUT WE NEED TO LEAVE. WE CAN GET THE CIVILIANS TO THE CAVE SYSTEMS.
THE IMPERIALS ARE ESCALATING AND WE NEED TO SPREAD THE WORD.
LUKE?
I UNDERSTAND.

THE DRILL CITADEL IS READY FOR ORBITAL DROP, AT YOUR LEISURE.
IT'S SHU-TORUN EQUIPMENT. DON'T *YOU* WANT TO LAUNCH IT?
ISN'T THAT WHAT QUEENS DO?
I'VE DONE IT A LOT. PLEASE, BE MY GUEST. YOU'LL LIKE IT.
DROP!
YOU WERE RIGHT.
I *DID* ENJOY THAT.

BENTHIC...
...I UNDERSTAND.
WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
WHAT'S AT STAKE HERE.
GOOD. NOW LOOK...

"...SEE THE EMPIRE'S LATEST DEFILEMENT OF OUR HOME."

WHAT'S THE PLAN?
YOU ARE WITH THE PARTISANS NOW, BOY.
WE DESTROY IT.
HEY, HAVEN'T YOU HEARD?
DESTROYING REALLY EXPENSIVE IMPERIAL EQUIPMENT?
THAT'S LUKE'S AND MY SPECIALTY.

STAR WARS™
NEXT ISSUE:

Tour
THE SEVEN SEAS
With
BLACK MANTA
EMPIRE
Call 555-FISH